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Statement

Presented by Didier Coulomb, Director General of the International Institute of Refrigeration (IIR)

Dear Delegates,

Last year, in Kigali, all the countries gathered here have agreed upon phasing down the use of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). It is now necessary to implement this agreement as quickly and efficiently as possible. As adopted, the Kigali amendment should reduce the temperature rise at the earth's surface between 0.1°C and 0.3°C by 2100. It should be possible to do better, if certain measures are implemented:

- Replace as of now hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), whose phase out is already scheduled, by refrigerants with low greenhouse effect. This may require changes to the phase-out schedules, focusing first on sectors where these refrigerants with low greenhouse effect can be quickly implemented;
- Seize the opportunity the replacement of these refrigerants represents, to improve the energy efficiency of facilities and more generally, of entire systems (building insulation, energy recovery, intelligent temperature control ...). We estimate that indirect emissions related to the production of the energy necessary to run cooling systems (including air conditioning), represent approximately 2.61 gigatons of CO₂ equivalent, or 63% of total emissions of the refrigeration sector.
- Improve the containment of refrigerants and their recovery at the end current facilities' operational lives;
- Implement all the necessary measures to install systems using refrigerants with low greenhouse effect safely, such as regulations on the design of facilities and the training and certification of operators. The flammability, toxicity and high pressures of alternative refrigerants should be addressed in a responsible and reasonable manner. Regulations, standards and building codes must be adapted as soon as possible to both guarantee the same safety level and take the evolution of technologies into account.
- Increase the dissemination of information on existing technologies as well as research, development, demonstrations on effective, energy-efficient systems, adapted to alternative refrigerants and alternative refrigeration technologies.

Finally, it should be recalled that the setting up of a cold chain that preserves foodstuffs and thus limits post-harvest losses, reduces the total greenhouse effect of the food supply chain. Implementing a cold chain when it does not yet exist is also an environmental duty.

Through its scientific conferences, publications and international network of experts, the International Institute of Refrigeration (IIR) is involved in these initiatives aimed at limiting global warming and promoting sustainable development. The IIR provides science-based, objective, practical and up to date information and expertise on the possible or future technologies and their possible uses in all the fields of refrigeration, including air conditioning, heat pumps and cryogenics.

The IIR is at your disposal.

Thank you.

Didier Coulomb
Director General of the International Institute of Refrigeration (IIR)